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WARREN

Officials give update on cleanup

A small amount of PCB contamination has been detected in the Mahoning River, officials say.

By AMANDA C. DAVIS
VINDICATOR TRIBUNE STAFF

WARREN — Officials working to remove contaminated materials from the former Mahoningside Power Plant Site said cleanup efforts should wrap up in six to eight weeks.

Mark Durno, on-site coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, said Friday that contaminants still exist on the Summit Street property.

"I'm not going to say that we're completely out of the woods yet," Durno said. "The objection here is to eliminate the public health threat by eliminating contaminated material."

What's been found: Durno also said a small amount of PCB contamination has been detected in the Mahoning River at a discharge point leading from an area where the facility once stood.

He said officials are unsure of the exact volume of contamination in the river but noted it will be cleaned up soon.

The plant, which was on a 5-acre site on the west bank of the Mahoning River, was leveled in March 1999 after sitting vacant for many years. Officials have cleaned up some of the site, which they said is contaminated with asbestos, heavy metals including mercury and cancer-causing PCBs.

Subsurface tests taken outside the former structure indicate very low or

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undetectable PCB levels, Durno said. Workers, however, are excavating a 3,000-square-foot subsurface area within the former plant, where contamination is "extensive," Durno said, adding that there is a possibility workers could find additional toads.

Contaminated materials are being removed from the site, solidified with lime and shipped to a hazardous waste landfill near Buffalo, N.Y., officials said.

Met with officials: Kevin Kralj, the city's development director, said Warren officials met Friday afternoon with representatives from Ohio Edison, the Ohio Department of Development, the Ohio and U.S. EPAs and McCabe Engineering, a Richfield company helping to abate the property.

Kralj said the meeting was called to bring everyone up to date on the project and to see how all parties can work together to secure more funding to help defray cleanup costs.

The U.S. EPA took over cleanup and related costs at the site last year.

Durno said the EPA has agreed to spend \$725,000 in federal Superfund money for the remainder of the cleanup, though the site is not considered a Superfund area.

Securing more money is necessary, Kralj said, explaining that additional site preparation will likely be needed to ready the property for development.

Vindicator (Youngstown, OH)

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